

READING

Part 1

Read the text and complete the tasks that follow. Choose a, b, or c. Put a circle round the most appropriate answer. An example is done for you.

All work and no play

The street was poorly lit, which suited the man who had just entered the tall, steel and glass building. Everything was quiet, just as he had foreseen it would be, apart from the humming noise of a lone vacuum cleaner on one of the lower floors. As he climbed the stairs, he went through his plan one last time. Only a minor detail escaped him: would the cleaning lady be Alice or Jane? Alice, he remembered, was Monday and Wednesday; Jane, Tuesday and Thursday. But, who on earth was Friday? No matter, he thought; he'd just have to wait and see.

He reached the second floor and went straight to the office he now knew so well. Having let himself in, he walked soundlessly across the floor to the computer workstation next to the big desk. The monitor glowed welcomingly in the darkness. Upstairs, the carpets were still being cleaned. As long as he could hear that, he knew he could get on with his business undisturbed.

Seated, he examined the screen. He felt no surprise to read the message, 'Three hours, twenty minutes and thirty seconds. Please wait.' The night before, it had been even longer. The delay never failed to give him great pleasure. What he felt during it was a sense of his own power. How could he possibly feel anything of the kind when he served his boss his coffee or when he was sent out on an errand to deliver packages to complete strangers? Nobody really knew him at all. 'Three hours, twenty seven minutes and five seconds. Please wait.' He knew he had given the Russian something more than he'd bargained for. As the minutes passed, his confidence grew.

Then the reply was up there on the screen for his eyes to see: 'G6 - H8'. The meaning of this retreat was immediately understood. The Russian was on the defensive. He had seen the threat in Thursday's move. But the real damage had been done, unnoticed, as early as Monday. Brimming with confidence, the man in the quiet office typed his reply. What was the good of waiting? Better to get it over with before Alice, or would it be Jane, arrived.

'Black resigns. New Game? Type Y for Yes, N for No'. Before there was any time to answer, the door opened. All the lights came on. 'Working late again, Humphrey?' a friendly voice asked. 'That's three times this week! I hope your boss realises what a good boy you are.' 'Y', he said in his excitement as his right index finger hit the key. 'You know very well why,' the voice went on. 'There aren't that many young men these days who'd be willing to come back after hours to make sure those awful computers are working properly, are there now?'

Humphrey did not contradict her. Before rising, he keyed in 'D2 - D4'. As he said good night, he cleared the screen.

Example: The events in this story must have taken place

- a) early in the week.
- b) midweek.
- c) just before the weekend.

Total: 6 marks

1. Humphrey
 - a) disliked his boss very much.
 - b) was involved in an illegal activity.
 - c) enjoyed taking part in certain kinds of competition.
2. It is likely that the Russian in the story
 - a) was a close friend of Humphrey's.
 - b) had met Humphrey but didn't know him very well.
 - c) had never met Humphrey.
3. During the day, Humphrey probably
 - a) kept quiet about coming back to the office after the others had left.
 - b) spent most of his time sitting at his computer workstation.
 - c) boasted to his colleagues about his successes.
4. What was Humphrey's reaction to the person who came in?
 - a) He was excited.
 - b) He hardly took any notice.
 - c) He showed extreme dislike for her.
5. What mistake did a person in this story make?
 - a) She or he misunderstood something that was said.
 - b) She or he mistook somebody for somebody else.
 - c) She or he got the days of the week mixed up.
6. Which of the following statements is true about Humphrey?
 - a) He did a lot of overtime without getting paid for it.
 - b) He had a high opinion of himself and found his job boring.
 - c) He lacked self-confidence, which made his job difficult for him.